

Washington, DC – As the job market continues to shrink with another 159,000 American jobs lost in September – the worst job loss in five years – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) supported a seven week extension of unemployment benefits. The Unemployment Compensation Extension Act (HR 6867) provides this assistance to workers who have exhausted the 13 weeks of additional compensation that the Congressman helped pass earlier this year. Action on this measure has become increasingly necessary as the number of Americans looking for work has climbed to 9.5 million in September – the highest number since December 1992. Over the past 12 months, the number of unemployed persons has increased by 2.2 million and the unemployment rate has risen by 1.4 percentage points. —

“Not only are there fewer job opportunities for hardworking Americans, but the costs of living has risen significantly, with retail gas prices still at \$3.58 per gallon and the cost of food already up 7.5 percent this year,” said Congressman Sestak. “We have a responsibility during difficult economic times to ensure that men and women looking for work can provide for themselves and their families and afford to search for a job.”

Nearly 800,000 workers are projected to exhaust their current extended unemployment benefits in October unless Congress acts by making resources available from the Federal unemployment trust fund, which contains more than the \$6 billion needed to cover the costs of the legislation. Furthermore, workers in high unemployment states are eligible for an additional 13 weeks of benefits (33 total weeks). Extending unemployment benefits is a particularly crucial provision in Pennsylvania where 56,465 people will lose benefits between October and December. Earlier this year, Congress helped 3.5 million Americans looking for jobs -- providing up to 13 weeks of extended unemployment benefits in every state to workers exhausting the 26 weeks of regular unemployment benefits.

“We also cannot forget that recipients spend unemployment benefits quickly, making this legislation an important part of our effort to stimulate the economy,” said Congressman Sestak. “In fact, one of Moody’s chief economists has determined that every dollar spent on unemployment compensation generates \$1.64 in new economic demand.”

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's*

*anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.*

**###**